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AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL.

ESTABLISHED BY SAMUEL WAGNER.

EDITED BY
G. S. WAGNER AND W. F. CLARKE.

"GO, LOOK TO THY BEES."—Tusser.

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HONEY.

Its Wonderful Healing Qualities.

ITS USE AS AN ARTICLE OF FOOD AND AS A
MEDICINE.

BY KARL GATTER.

PREFACE.

It is far more difficult than one would at first suppose, to write a book on honey, and its varied qualities as a source of nourishment and means of remedy for disease, especially when you pass in review before the reader its general use a thousand years ago, its gradual decline, and now its re-appearance. One has thus,

1. To trace the history of honey back to the most ancient times, to find out what were then its various uses and qualities, and what were its prerogatives as a means of food and medicine.

2. To place before the reader the causes through which honey gradually lost its honored place on the table and in the pharmacopœia.

3. To show how, in later times, honey has been gradually restored to its old position, and is again becoming a choice food on the table, as well as a remedy in sickness.

The object of this little work is not to give an extended essay or dissertation on the advantages of honey, but to call the attention of the friendly reader to the advantages and healing virtues of this wonderful product of nature, and to recommend to the beekeepers its rational management; to enlighten the purchaser as to the various means used for adulterating honey, and especially to urge the greater consumption of this health giving product, so that as in earlier times, and as yet among many nations, especially the Polanders, the Russians, and the inhabitants of the Orient, it will become a common article of food, and be found in the larder of every one. Lord Canning, and an honored German chemist, uttered the axiom, that the use of honey and soap was a measure of culture and opulence; to this, Baumgartner adds the industrial use of sulphur; and I add, inform me as to the use of honey by any people or nation,

and I will tell you how they stand as regards health and physical strength, since pure, unadulterated honey is for the healthy the simplest, most natural, healthiest and most strengthening food, for the sick their best remedy, and for the convalescent the true balsam of life, to restore their strength and health.

That in writing the history of honey, I should also touch on bee-culture, which is so closely connected with it, lies partly in the very nature of the subject, and partly from my own love of bee-culture.

A strong influence for publishing this book, was the fact that I, a sufferer from hemorrhages, already given up to despair, and at the verge of the grave, was saved by the wonderful curative powers of honey, and now, thank God, I am freed, not only from weakness of my lungs, but rejoice in the possession of perfect health.

At my first attack, upwards of thirty years ago, powders and tea were ordered for me, which benefited me but little. I then placed little confidence in honey, which I used occasionally, and in small quantities. Judging from my present knowledge, I believe that the honey was the only remedy that was doing me any good, and it is this that I have to thank for the gradual, the sure restoration of my health.

As my disease increased, I began to use cod liver oil, which in some measure mitigated my trouble, but at the same time weakened and injured my stomach, so that I could hardly digest anything more, and my condition became worse and worse. Again I returned to honey, when my suffering immediately began to decrease and disappear. Besides the use of honey, I took pains to preserve my breast and lungs from injury, which, in my trying situation as public teacher, was almost impossible. My disease being caused by my constant teaching during so many years. I gave up my profession, and honey as my only medicine, whereby I, by the simplest, safest, quickest and pleasantest manner (for I was fond of honey), relieved the disease in my throat, and out of thankfulness I now write this apology, for the use and benefit of many, especially for the use of those suffering from diseases of the throat and lungs.

I have for many years devoted my closest attention to honey, collected everything relating to it, tested various recommended methods of pu-

5. Or, if preferred, movable combs may be used, and the combs be cut out and placed in the frames, and placed in the new hive, and the whole colony be thus transferred. But probably few farmers would wish thus to engage in transferring stocks, or using the comb frames after they are transferred. But either plan may be adopted, and hives may be made with either the frames or bars, as thought most desirable.

The result the first season must depend upon the strength of the colony in the early part of the season. When the number of colonies suited to the production of the field is acquired, little further care is required, but to place the boxes in the hive early in the season, and remove them when filled and capped.

I am so confident that this is the true road to the greatest success in securing honey in the greatest amount, at the least trouble and expense, that I feel an interest in its general adoption.

JASPER HAZEN.

Albany, N. Y.

[For the American Bee Journal.]

Bees at Blue Knob, Pennsylvania.

MR. EDITOR—As I have not seen anything from this section in regard to bee-keeping, I will drop you a line. There are no extensive beekeepers in this vicinity, but people are beginning to awake in the interest of bee-keeping. A number of persons about here are adopting the movable comb hives, mostly Langstroth. A great many bees died last winter. I saved seven out of twenty-one, and some of them came out very weak in the spring. I had seventeen in a bee house, and four on the summer stands, and those on the summer stands all died.

Bees did not swarm much about here this season on account of their being so weak in the spring. I made three artificial swarms, and introduced three Italian queens in the hives from which I took out the swarms. They are the only Italian bees within five miles around. I got them from Mr. H. Alley, of Massachusetts, and they are doing very well so far.

Our bees did not get much honey until the buckwheat commenced to blossom, then they commenced in real earnest, and one swarm in a double Langstroth hive, on which I used the extractor, gathered sixty-six pounds of buckwheat honey—an insignificant amount, as compared to Novice and Gallup's bees, but it is considered good about here. But some of our old foggy neighbors think the bees spoil the buckwheat. In a conversation with a man the other day, I said the bees done pretty well on the buckwheat. "Yes," said he, "it cost many a bushel of buckwheat, too." I told him I did not think the bees hurt the buckwheat any. "Yes," said he, "I am confident they do, because that honey in the blossom is intended for the grain, and, of course, if the bees take it out, the grain suffers in consequence," and as I know very little of botany, I could not argue him out of that notion.

AARON DIEHL.

Blue Knob, Blair County, Pa., Sept. 24, 1872.

[For the American Bee Journal.]

Chips from "Sweet Home."

MR. EDITOR:—This means every reader of that old stand-by, the American Bee Journal. Our honey season is nearing its close. Linn and white clover was almost an entire failure. Bees gathered freely from shoemaker, but it was quite strong, and, like strong butter, lasted well when used on the table. But we have received a bountiful supply from autumn blossoms, which grow abundant on the bottoms of the Mississippi. Fully one-half of bees died in this vicinity last winter; we lost one-sixth. In five miles last fall we numbered about 500 hives. I am located in the heart of this honey region.

Box honey will be almost an entire failure in some places, owing to the coolness of the weather preventing comb building. Honey slinging hives have done well. Our slinger is just what we want, except that it is not large enough to hold sufficient honey underneath the frame.

BEE HOUSE.

Ours is 8 by 16, should be 12 by 16. We use it for a shop and slinging honey. It has a door at the south end, and a revolving window on each side. It revolves on two pins, and is just the thing. When bees follow us in, or get in, which they will do, they will fly to the window, when we quickly reverse the window, and our thieves are easily put out.

LORD AND PALMER.

New Boston, Ill., Sept. 21, 1872.

[For the American Bee Journal.]

Novice's New Hive.

After an experience of four years, with practically the same box, I can endorse all Novice says about his new hive without top or bottom. The coming hive must be large enough to contain all a swarm can fill for a season without swarming, and have a movable board inside, to enlarge or contract at pleasure. In spring, the young bees or brood nest is always in form of a ball, always enlarging as the stock increases. I allow no more combs than the bees can cover, and add the combs or frames so as to keep this ball in centre of hive, with frames for storing surplus above and on sides. In very strong stocks, some of the choicest honey will be stored in lower story, even down to bottom.

The fewer partitions or other obstructions between the upper and lower story the better.

As soon as pasturage fails from frost or drouth, remove the queen with brood combs, and bees enough to protect them, and destroy the balance. My first object is to produce all the honey I can, and then save as large a percentage for market as possible. Thus I have almost all young bees for winter stock. Why feed old bees all winter that will die of old age before they are wanted to gather honey next season? If increase of stock is wanted by having extra queens raised in nuclei on hand, you can make all you see fit. In

opens and the bottom and back which hold the frames (not forming the main hive) draw out and are supported by the bottom of the hive, which extends far enough in front to support it, and the frames can then be opened to the right and left or taken off, as they are hung to a hook on the back, and the frames are so made that they never touch together. The hive is something like Mitchel's Buckeye hive, although I had never seen or heard of his hive at the time I got up mine.

I had eighteen of these hives last winter; they were placed along with the other hives in two cellars, and only two of them showed any signs of dysentery, and all came out strong and gave two swarms each. The second swarms were put back and the old stocks gave a yield of honey. The hive is not patented, and any one can have the benefit of it that may wish to try it.

C. Sanders of Chester, Vt., writes: What few bees lived through last winter have done well in this section. I wintered six swarms on their summer stands which came through all right. I like wintering on summer stands better than housing. I have taken one hundred and ten pounds from one swarm, and one hundred and twenty-five pounds from another, nice box honey, and other swarms have done nearly as well. I use the Langstroth hive.

D. D. Palmer, of New Boston, Ill., "Sweet Home," writes: My report for 1872 is as follows: Forepart of season, very poor; a fair increase. I now have fifty-six hives, forty-six of which gave me honey to the amount of 2,650 pounds, mostly *slung* honey. My best hive was blacks, which gave me 205 pounds. "I might have taken more if I had slung oftener." My twenty best gave me 2,000 pounds, an average of 100 pounds each.

Hazard Babcock, of South Brookfield, Madison Co., New York, writes: Inasmuch as Mr. Quinby has given his theory on the cause of bees dying last spring, I will tell what has happened to my bees in the early part of this season. A part of them were put into a cellar, and a part were put into the ground, in all about forty stocks. Four came out of the ground dead, and one out of ten that were put into the cellar. Those of the cellar showed signs of dysentery several weeks before they were set out, on the 5th of April, while those in the ground have just begun to show symptoms. I supposed that the trouble was all over, then but in a short time after I began to find queens dragged out of the hives; some were dead, others were apparently all right and able to fly. This was too early for drones, although a good many queens were hatched but were lost for the want of drones. I lost twelve stocks out of fifteen that killed their queens. Several well populated stocks dwindled away to almost nothing; they had a queen and brood and were strengthened up with other queenless stocks, but to no advantage until the queens were destroyed and queen cells given them. Then they went along quite well. Early in September, 1871, I introduced several Italian queens. They had no brood that fall, nor had they any brood when taken out of the ground in the spring; but have done well through this season, while others of

the same lot of queens went up. The bees had no chance to fly out last fall after the 20th of October, till the 5th of April, '72. If they had had a chance to have emptied themselves last November, a good many of the old bees would have been left out of the play and young ones would have been reared in their stead, and the disease would not have been. The honey that was taken out of the hives that the bees died in was fed back to the bees this fall, and they have raised brood and are all right yet. This was done the first of September, and in small quantities at a time. After that was used up for brooding they were fed coffee sugar enough for winter stores. In common winters, bees will do well in a cellar that has a good deal of water in it, if the hives are well ventilated at the top and set high up from the bottom, and set so as not to feel the least jar, the cap and honey-board taken off and several thicknesses of old carpet, or any woolen cloth, put over them, without any board or wood on top, as that will gather dampness.

MAKING UP LOST GROUND.

MR. EDITOR.—You will remember my writing to you last June, saying I had lost all my bees the past winter except two swarms. Well, I bought *two* and went to work trying to improve them, both in numbers and quality; how well I have succeeded you may judge for yourself. I made me an extractor that I think will beat a Peabody or Gray & Winder's, and cost me much less, and gently informed my stock that I should expect a good report from them.

I now have on hand twenty stocks of bees, and have taken 429 pounds of fine extracted honey, besides selling a few Italian queens. I did not extract any honey until July 10th. Most of the honey was gathered from *smart-weed*, and the quality is very good. I have sold most of it for fifteen and twenty cents per pound.

What think you of my progress? If I have been successful, the A. B. J. can claim much of the credit. "Long may it wave," only I'd like it twice a month during the summer months. Can't we have it? Say yes, and oblige,

Yours,

FRANK W. CHAPMAN.

Morrison, Whiteside Co., Ill.

J. Scott, of Epworth, Dubuque county, Iowa, writes: I have been a subscriber for the AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL for the last two years. It has become one of the necessities of bee keeping, with me, at least. I have not Italianized but a small portion of my bees as yet, but shall next season if all is well. I have tried the Italians until I am satisfied that they are the bees for me. You are aware that bees wintered badly in this locality last winter. I lost eighteen out of forty-seven, and what were left were in very bad condition, still from twelve (12) swarms that I was able to give two sets of combs, I took twelve hundred (1200) pounds white clover honey and two hundred pounds buckwheat honey, besides leaving them abundance of honey for winter. This, understand, (viz: the amount above,) was extracted honey. The balance of my bees I used boxes on as usual, and got not to exceed forty pounds surplus.